



Ceann Seirbhíse, Míchumais
Baile Átha Cliath Theas, Cill Dara &
Iarthar Chill Mhantáin

Teach Darach, Páirc na Mílaoise, An Nás,
Co. Chill Dara, W91 KDC

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5 July 2024

Deputy Patrick Costello
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Ref: PQ ref 25526/24

Re: Children's Disability Network Team (CDNT) 3 on Armagh Road, Crumlin

"To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth for an update on a matter (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter."

- Patrick Costello

Dear Deputy Costello,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth to the Health Service Executive for direct response. I requested that the Interim Children's Disability Network Manager for CDNT 3 to examine the matter and the following outlines the position.

Since September 2023, the existing team in St Columba's CDNT3 have been working diligently to progress the service in line with the model of service delivery and in line with the principles of family centred practice. Despite the number of vacancies on the team, the team are delivering interdisciplinary support to families.

CDNT3 have gained two Physiotherapists through the international recruitment consortium and there are ongoing recruitment efforts through the targeted international recruitment campaign, national campaign and local campaigns. The service is also actively engaging with recruitment agencies in an effort to employ clinical staff in the short term, through which a number of the staff are currently employed. CDNT3 are engaging with other CDNT's to cover priority needs. Engagement with family representatives is continuing with Family Forums every 3-4 months.

The team have successfully implemented the following initiatives with overwhelmingly positive feedback from parents who have attended these interventions.

- The continued provision of Individualised Family Service Plans (IFSP's) with parents/guardians and children and young people
- Ongoing provision of evidence based and evidence informed parenting programmes to parents on the open and waiting lists:

- 2 programmes of Cygnet - 27 families (November 2023 and May 2024)
- 1 Teen life programme offered- 11 families (March/April 2024)
- 1 Early Bird Programme offered-8 families (April-June 2024)
- Interdisciplinary advice clinics on a rolling basis
- Targeted workshops offered:
 - Transition to Adulthood
 - Meeting with Special Education Needs Organisers (SENO's) to support parents of children transitioning to school
 - Visual supports
 - Managing emotions
- Intake is being progressed as swiftly as possible taking into account the capacity of the existing staffing resource, being able to offer IFSP's and offering intervention.
- The team are prioritising offering Autism assessments to support access to special schools and to offer evidence informed parent information sessions, as mentioned above i.e. Cygnet, Teen life, Early Bird. This applies to families who are open and those on the waiting list.
- CDNT3 are accessing a small number of assessments through a private provider to support their clinical work.

In terms of staffing CDNT 3 currently has the following posts filled:

- 1 CDNM
- 1 Administrator
- 1.7 Psychologists in post, to increase to 2.2 on 08/07/24 and further increased to 2.4 in August
- 1 Occupational Therapist
- 2 Physiotherapists
- 3.5 Therapy Assistants in post

Vacancies include:

- 3.5 Speech and Language Therapists
- 1 SLT Assistant
- 3.0 Occupational Therapists
- 1 Psychologist
- 1.3 Social Worker

Current team strengths:

- Motivated staff
- Good work culture and relationships
- Hard working – going above and beyond
- Creative and Innovative
- Prioritising service delivery and maximising resources

Team challenges:


- Staffing and recruitment (national challenge)
- Quantity of intervention that can be offered
- Supporting the model of service delivery with significantly limited staff
- Limited flexibility
- DNA's- individual appointments, assessments and groups
- Communication with all families

The current case load includes 230 open cases and 149 children waiting.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

P.P

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine Duffy." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Margaret O'Neill,

Interim Head of Service, Disability Services

Dublin South, Kildare and West Wicklow Community Healthcare.